

THE QUIVER

Saturday, August 14, 1869.



"Then it was that she told the story of her life."—p. 709.

UNDER FOOT.

BY ALTON CLYDE, AUTHOR OF "MAGGIE LYNNE," ETC.

CHAPTER XLVI.—A REVELATION.

A SUDDEN impulse made Hugh Crawton lean across the table and grasp the hand of the old clerk, which he wrung fervently. "You believe it, Royton! Oh, thanks, thanks for those words!"

they seem to let in new light upon me, and do me more good than I can tell."

But Giles Royton shrank back with a look of distress, saying hurriedly, "Don't thank me in that

way, Mr. Hugh, it puts me down, and makes me feel so much worse in my own eyes. I believed, because I knew, you were innocent; and instead of thanks from you, I deserve nothing but blame and reproach for not coming forward at the right time and bearing witness to the truth. Will you forgive me?"

"Forgive! what are you talking about, my good fellow? I don't know that you ever did me any wrong," said wondering Hugh.

"Yes I have, a cruel wrong; and even now I might not have had courage to undo it of myself. I meant to do right by you, but I was always weak—weak of will and purpose. This is all Nelly's doing, you owe her the thanks. She always kept alive whatever good was in me."

"I can't make you out, Royton; you seem to be talking riddles. What is this wrong which you have done me?"

"The wrong of holding my tongue, when a few words would have saved you from being driven from your uncle's counting-house. Ay, now you shrink from me, as well you may, Hugh Cawton; but don't think harder of me than you can help. I know you have been falsely suspected, and if God spares me, before this time to-morrow Daniel Cawton shall know it as well. I shall be able to prove my words."

A hot rush of crimson had succeeded the deadly paleness which overspread Hugh's face, as he started from his seat.

"What are you saying, Royton? Oh, no—no! you would not surely trifle with me in this."

"No more than I would trifle with my own life."

"Thank God for this mercy!" breathed Hugh. "Now I can work my way, and try what stuff I am made of in the New World; no longer under any man's foot, I can leave England with a free heart."

"Leave England!" repeated Royton, starting in his turn; "I was in hopes we should be having you back among us."

"I am promised a good opening in Australia," explained Hugh; "but I did not like the thought of going out like a convict with a ban upon my name. I have a friend who has been working very zealously in my interest, and I have left myself almost entirely in his hands."

"May I ask who that friend may be?" said the clerk with strange eagerness, a quick flash of intelligence lighting his dull eyes.

"My cousin, Mr. Mark Danson."

"Mr. Mark Danson," slowly repeated Giles, drawing a long breath as he added, "I thought it was him."

Hugh's attention was so pre-occupied that he had not noticed anything peculiar in his visitor's manner. He resumed: "When my cousin offered me his friendship, on my first going into the firm, I little thought that the time would come when I should

stand in sore need of a friend; but he has been to me like a brother."

"Yes, very like a brother," interjected Giles, under his breath.

Hugh continued, pouring out his confidence without restraint in the exuberance of his grateful feeling towards Cousin Mark, "I am indebted to him for the idea of bettering my condition by emigrating. He has offered to assist me to go out to Melbourne, and has written to some influential friends to procure me a situation there."

"And have you decided to go, Mr. Hugh?" the clerk asked, drily, giving his mouth an expressive twist that the young man did not see.

"Partly; I am to see my cousin to-morrow, to talk it all over. But, Royton, you have not yet given me your explanation; tell me at once, and relieve me from this fever of suspense."

It took only a few minutes to put Hugh Cawton in possession of the disclosure which Giles Royton had made at the bedside of his sick daughter. The young man listened with blanched cheek and startled, dilating eyes, his hand now and then grasping the edge of the table, and his lips quivering with excitement, as the words of the speaker gave him the clue to the mystery, and unfolded, one by one, the facts of the deep-laid plot which cruel treachery had aimed against his prospects and good name.

"Who can have done me this injury? You do not tell me the name of my enemy. Stay—you said just now that you had done me a wrong. Oh, Royton, is it possible that you have had a hand in this?"

The old clerk was deeply agitated; that involuntary suspicion hurt him more than Hugh could have guessed; for the man had much undeveloped goodness in him, easily accessible to any appeal; and with all its infirmities and its moral cowardice, his nature had some fine chords keenly sensitive to such words as Hugh had spoken.

"What have I ever done that you should lay that upon me? Look in my face, and read your answer. I have done you no wrong, except in holding my tongue when I should have spoken."

"Forgive me, Royton; I might have known you had not;" and Hugh extended his hand, which was warmly grasped. "Now tell me the name," he said, huskily.

But, for some unaccountable reason, Giles Royton seemed to evade the question.

"Can you think of any one in the counting-house who had an interest in seeing you ruined, Mr. Hugh?"

"Not one," was the answer.

Just then a clock somewhere in the house was heard striking the hour. Giles counted the strokes, and compared the time with his own watch, saying, as he rose from his seat, "I must hurry away now, Mr. Hugh. It may seem queer, but I don't want to

tell you the name till to-morrow. I have a purpose which I cannot work out unless I keep it a secret. But you may trust me that it will be for your good. You say you are going to see Mr. Mark to-morrow; let me know the place and the hour, and I will step in upon you, as if by accident, and tell you all. But understand, you are to say nothing to your cousin that you have seen or heard anything from me. Better let the good news come unexpectedly. You may put this down as an odd fancy of my own; but don't doubt me, Mr. Hugh. All I ask is, wait till to-morrow, the suspense will not be very long."

There was a peculiar expression on Giles Royton's face that greatly perplexed Hugh. Before he could answer, the door opened softly and his mother came in.

CHAPTER XLVII.

ELEANOR AND HER VISITOR.

ELEANOR sat at her parlour-window, waiting and watching for the coming of May Rivers. She had received no answer to the letter which had cost her such a struggle to write, and which she had sent on its errand with such trembling fear and hope. No answer; but she accepted the young lady's silence as a sign that the favour she had asked would be granted. So she prepared for the interview, which she knew would be a trial, and tried to brace her nerves for the task which she had voluntarily imposed upon herself. Taking some light needlework in her hand, to keep her from impatience, she drew a chair near the window, and sat so that she might command the first approach of a stranger. Eleanor was gradually recovering her strength in the bright summer days, but the languor of weakness was still upon her, and her illness had left her painfully fragile in appearance. Her needle went slowly through her fingers, as if it kept time to the beating of a heavy heart, often suspended altogether when she caught the sound of wheels in the street, and paused to listen and watch. Then when the cab or carriage passed without stopping, she would drop her hold of the curtain with a little impatient gesture, and resume her work.

Soft showers had fallen in the early hours of the morning, and light feathery clouds were still floating in the sky; but the sun was shining out, with the promise of a bright day, and the only effect of the rain had been to leave a dewy moisture on the ground and a refreshing coolness in the air. There was nothing in the weather to deter even a dainty young lady from venturing on a short journey. So thought Eleanor, as the question, "Would she come?" presented itself again and again to her mind. She had an eager longing to see May Rivers, of whom she had heard from the time that the young girl had left school. Her father had often related to her bits of gossip which somehow found their way to the counting-house. Glowing hints about the beauty and accom-

plishments of Daniel Crawton's ward, with whispers which did not scruple to link the name of the young heiress with that of Mr. Danson, in anticipation of a future matrimonial alliance between them. Eleanor silently listened to all this; but as time passed, bringing estrangement between her and Mark, and the long-delayed acknowledgment of their marriage was making her heart sick with suspense and hope deferred, she recalled what she had heard, and the rumours which she had before quietly put aside as idle talk, began to receive some colouring of truth. Mark had been won by the charm of a new face. She accused him, but he threw it off lightly and laughingly, with some mocking jest about her jealousy. But she was not convinced. The doubt fastened upon her mind, and received its worst confirmation in the mode of treatment which he adopted towards her. It was during her illness, when the last appeal to her unworthy husband had failed, and her father had confided to her the secret of Mark Danson's conspiracy against Hugh Crawton. Then she decided that the time had come for her to give her warning to May Rivers, who had now a new claim upon her interest, as the half-sister of the man whom her friend Margaret loved and, perhaps, would marry. From this source, too, she had been able to gather additional information about the young lady; for, in discussing the singular events which had brought such change in her lover's prospects, Margaret often mentioned the charming young sister to whom she had been introduced. And Eleanor, familiar with every phase and turn of thought in the mind of her friend, saw that she was beginning to like May Rivers for her own sake.

It was during one of these confidential talks that Margaret unconsciously winged an arrow to Eleanor's heart.

"There is my cousin, Mr. Mark Danson, for whom I have told you that I have a sort of antipathy, Nelly. Well, I half suspect that he has a preference for Miss May, from his conscious manner once or twice when she chanced to be named; but I do not know whether it is likely to be returned. My cousin does not seem over-pleased with the discovery of her relationship to Charles. It may be he is afraid it will give him some influence over her which will be exerted against his interest, for you know, dear, Mark and Charles never get on well together, they were antagonists from the time of their first meeting."

"The time has come when my silence would be even a greater wrong than was that of my poor father with regard to Hugh Crawton. She may be getting to love Mark, and, come what will, she must be warned and saved."

This was what the young wife said to herself, after that talk with Margaret, when she made up her mind to send the letter to May Rivers.

Absorbed in her own sad thoughts, Eleanor forgot her watch of the window; thus she did not notice

the approach of a cab, with an elderly man, who looked like a servant out of livery, on the box beside the driver. He seemed on the look-out for some particular number, for the cab came somewhat slowly up the street, and he kept the houses on each side under close observation, until at last he exclaimed, in a sort of cheerful soliloquy, "Here we are; Prospect Terrace, No. 10. This must be the place."

Eleanor heard the stopping of the cab, and knew that her expected visitor had arrived. She started, dropped her work, and stood up, trembling with agitation. Then she managed to ring the bell, as a signal for Ann to be ready to answer the door, catching a hurried glance at her own face in the mantel-glass as she passed back to her chair, into which she dropped, her heart beating fast, and the colour flushing and paling on her cheek. At last she was to see her—this May Rivers, who had unconsciously been her rival, and of whom she had drawn so many ideal pictures. She had never analysed her own feelings on the subject; yet it must be confessed that, blended with her anxiety to see May, there was a secret longing of womanly curiosity to examine for herself the beauty of which she had often heard such praises. If Eleanor had been watching at the window, she would have seen the elderly servant-man in the act of getting down from the box to open the cab-door, and hand out a slight, girlish figure, that tripped lightly across the pavement. As she passed into the gate she paused an instant to say, "You need not wait here all the time, Barker; let the man drive slowly round the neighbourhood until you think I shall be ready to go."

Thus she dismissed the servant who had come to be her protector in this unknown region—a proceeding which would have increased the dismay of poor Aunt Lydia, who was at that moment torturing herself with drawing sensational mental pictures of the probable dangers which her darling might be then encountering.

Eleanor, listening for the first sound of the strange voice, thought she had never heard her own name sound so sweet as in that silver-toned inquiry. A few seconds more, and the visitor was in the room. One quick, comprehensive glance sufficed to convey to her a pleased impression of the simple, well-chosen dress, the cool, airy grace of movement, and frank, easy manner which at once gave and excited confidence. Above all, the charm of the face as it first flashed upon her from the folds of a light lace veil, fresh and sweet as a moss-rose within its coyly-shrouding leaves.

Eleanor's heart throbbed wildly, but there was no touch of envious depreciation in the admiring comment which she made to herself, "Margaret scarcely did her justice; she is even more lovely than I anticipated."

It was strange how rapidly the ice of ceremony

was broken down between these two, who thus met for the first time under such singular circumstances. They seemed drawn together by some subtle freemasonry of feeling. Eleanor wondered how it came to pass that she found herself so soon at ease with the stranger, and ready to open her heart to her unreservedly, as though she had been an old friend like Margaret Crawton.

"Thanks for coming so promptly, Miss Rivers; it is a proof that you believed and trusted me."

May inclined her head and smiled.

Eleanor added, "Something told me that I should see you to-day, still I could not help doubting; it was so unusual a request to come from a stranger that you would have been justified in refusing."

"I did think it singular," confessed May, frankly; "but after I read your letter, I made up my mind without hesitation."

The expression in Eleanor's eyes thanked her again; but in spite of this mutual candour and the feeling of confidence which seemed established between them, Eleanor felt it hard to approach the real object of this visit, and break at once through the reserve which had been forced upon her, until it had become a habit doubly hard, to have to tell the story of her life to a stranger; to lift the veil from her sad heart, and lay bare its hidden wound of outraged love to those young eyes, however kindly their gaze might be.

Something made her shrink even from uttering the name of Mark Danson in the presence of May Rivers. But she had set herself the task, and it must be done; not alone for her own sake, but for that of the bright young creature whose health she might be the means of saving from a cruel wound.

"Oh, I hope she has not let him win her heart," moaned Eleanor to herself; "it is so bitter to be deceived where we love, and it might shake her trust in others who would be good and true. But how can I tell it?"

Here her hand involuntarily caught at the almost invisible silken cord which encircled her own fair neck; the cord which held her wedding-ring—time-honoured pledge and seal of what should be the most sacred of all earthly bonds—love, faith, honour, and unity till death; but to poor Eleanor such a sad symbol, for she had never been free from a crushing heartache since that tiny circle of gold had been worn in her bosom, a secret which she could not tell.

In the meantime, May, with a grave, expectant look on her sweet face, sat waiting for what was to come, and trying to weave some history of her own about that beautiful, sad-eyed woman whose appearance had taken her by surprise, as something widely different from what she had expected to see.

Just as Eleanor had gathered courage to begin, her bird, inspired, perhaps, by a broad beam of sunshine that fell across his cage, suddenly broke forth

with a gushing trill of rich, full-throated melody; and Eleanor had to wait until the little warbler had poured out the last of his ringing notes. When she did speak, her voice was so low and faltering that May had to draw her seat nearer to enable her to hear distinctly.

"You will remember, Miss Rivers, I said in my letter that the favour I asked concerned your interest as well as mine. First, I shall have to speak of a gentleman whom I believe you know—Mr. Mark Danson."

"Mr. Mark Danson!" repeated May, wonderingly; but Eleanor, who was intently watching her face, read there nothing but surprise. There was none of the startled, half-blushing consciousness which a girl might be expected to betray at the unexpected mention of a name that was very dear to her.

Relieved by this discovery, Eleanor went on, with more firmness: "Before I saw you, Miss Rivers, I asked for trust; now I must beg for your forbearance and forgiveness if I—I say anything to pain you. First tell me—I know I shall seem to be going beyond all bounds, but, oh! believe that I would not ask such a question without a very grave reason—tell me if there is any engagement between you and Mark—I mean Mr. Danson."

May's cheeks burned, and her thin nostril dilated with something of anger as she gave her emphatic, decided negative.

"Then you do not care for him?" gasped poor Eleanor, with painful eagerness.

"Care for him!" retorted May, with strongly-marked surprise. "Mr. Danson is my guardian's nephew, I have known him ever since I was a child, but I never cared for him the least; but now——" She stopped, hesitated, then added, "I was going to say that I do not even respect him."

"One more question, Miss Rivers, you will not be angry with me when you know all. Has he ever made you an offer of marriage?"

"He has," said May, colouring to her temples as she made the confession; "he did so as if he wished to go through the form of doing so, rather than as if he really meant it."

"And you never cared for him. Oh, thank God

for that!" Eleanor murmured, crushing her slender hands tightly together.

May stood up and bent over her, with her face full of genuine sympathy and distress as she asked, "What ails you? Can I do anything?"

"No, I am better," replied Eleanor, faintly; "and now that you have so freely given me your confidence, you have a right to mine. You heard me thank God that you did not care for Mark Danson; it was because I know it will spare you bitter pain, and I did not wish to have a sister in suffering. I sent that letter for you to come here, because I had heard he was paying you attentions, and I feared you might be won to listen to professions which he is not free to make, for I—I am his unhappy wife, never publicly acknowledged by him, but still he is my husband, and you are the first, except my father, to whom I have ever told my secret. Even Margaret Crawton, my dearest friend, does not know of it yet."

As she spoke, Eleanor drew out her wedding-ring, and held it up for May to see.

"His wife!" exclaimed the visitor, with a start "Mark Danson married!"

The next moment Eleanor felt her hand gently drawn into that warm young clasp which she felt was full of womanly sympathy. Then it was that she told the story of her life, and gave the history of her secret marriage, the one false step which had brought her so much misery.

The listener made little comment, except what could be conveyed in a fervent pressure of the hand. She felt that words could not heal the wounded heart that was thus laid bare to her.

"You will keep this confidence?" said Eleanor, wistfully. "The time will soon come when all must be known, but at present there are reasons why it is best for the secret to remain as it is. You promise?"

May's lip was trembling, and tears were hanging thickly on her eyelashes. "Yes, Eleanor, I do promise," she whispered, for the first time using her Christian name; and Eleanor looked thankfully into her face, for she knew that she would keep her word.

(To be continued.)

CHARITY.

"The greatest of these is charity."—1 Cor. xiii. 13

IT is scarcely possible to imagine a more valuable contribution to the ethics of Christianity, than that which is given us in 1 Cor. xiii. In the preceding chapter, the apostle has been pointing out the exceeding variety of the gifts, whether miraculous or natural, with which the early Church was blessed. He has been pointing out how God has

set the members, every one in the body, each in his own separate capacity, fulfilling his appointed duties; and from the analogy of this he has deduced that the various gifts were likewise intended, each in its own place, to discharge a particular office. And if one should be exalted over another—if one man, possessed of some particular gift, should look down upon his brother man, to whom

it was given to execute a different, and possibly a humbler, part in the economy of Christ's Church, it would be as absurd as if one member of the body should despise another, and the eye should say to the hand, "I have no need of thee." Then, in the midst of his argument, with usual abruptness and carelessness of all the rules of oratory, he breaks off at the sudden thought of one thing, which might, indeed, be exalted above all others; of one Christian grace, which was "more excellent" than all "the best gifts," even the all-important grace of "charity;" the only means by which God could be known, and the only link which could bind together into one harmonious whole the various characters and diversified forms of society in that and all subsequent time. This, then, is the subject on which we propose now to suggest some few thoughts, bearing in mind all the time that it is one on which human language might spend its utmost powers, and to which human thought might devote its longest and its deepest study, and yet fail to know more than is taught us by St. Paul in these few impassioned and eloquent words.

Now, it is a very noteworthy circumstance, and one which may teach us, I think, a very important lesson in reference to that beautiful unity and symmetry which should exist in the perfect Christian character, that this description of charity should come, not from the pen of St. John, who was pre-eminently the apostle of love, but from that of St. Paul, who was as pre-eminently the apostle of faith. Modern infidelity would teach us that Christianity is only the development of the human intellect; that it is but the refinement and purification of heathen moral systems; that all its precepts may be found in the writings of the great philosophers; in short, that it is but a human system developed according to the development of the mind of man. Now, if this were so, we should without doubt find in it those same peculiarities which we find in other merely human systems. Just as each individual teacher and each individual church exalts that which is the pre-eminent characteristic of their own disposition, so we should have found the great preachers of Christianity preaching each one that which was essentially his own gospel; and, indeed, inasmuch as the heavenly treasure is given us in and through earthly vessels—inasmuch as the Spirit of God spake through human hearts and human lips, we do, to some extent, find that this is so. St. Paul, a man of vigorous intellect, and bold, free thought, is essentially the apostle of faith, and preached of the liberty of each individual conscience. St. Peter, a man of great personal courage, which sometimes verged even upon rashness, is essentially the apostle of zeal, and preached of that Christian courage which would carry man on by a martyr's

death to win a martyr's crown. St. John, a man of quiet, contemplative disposition, and tender, sensitive heart, is essentially the apostle of love, and preached of the inner and emotional, rather than of the outer and energetic, aspect of the Christian life. Yet through all these diversities of character, this one grace of charity shines out pre-eminent above every other, throwing into the shade the zeal and energy of St. Peter, the faith and liberty of St. Paul, bidding him tell us that though all things were lawful for him, yet all things were not expedient; bidding him declare of knowledge that "it puffeth up; but charity buildeth up;" and in the passage which we are now considering, that great as were faith and hope, yet greater than both was charity. Have we not here, in this wondrous unanimity of these three apostles, in the uniform manner in which they exalt this grace above all others, even those which were most especially their own—have we not here a proof that they derived their teaching, varied though it be, from the same divine source? Can we not see in the varied workmanship—the several edifices which they raised—traces of the same divine hand? Shall we hesitate to own that the Spirit which inspired them all was essentially the Spirit of Love?

May we not draw from it, also, an argument for the unity and symmetry of the Christian character? There are those in the Church now, as there have ever been, who exalt into an undue pre-eminence their own favourite doctrine. One takes the faith of St. Paul, and having grasped the great and glorious doctrine, that there is salvation for fallen man through Jesus Christ, and "through faith in his blood," forgets that that only can be a living and a true faith which issues out in a holy and a virtuous life. Another takes the liberty of St. Paul, and, remembering that "all things are lawful," suffers his liberty to become a cloak of maliciousness, allowing himself to place a stumbling-block in the way of the weak brother, who cannot rise with him above the restraints of a dogmatic religion, but stumbles and falls through his "inexpedient" display of strength. And a third takes the works of St. James and the formulism of St. Peter; and knowing that "faith without works is dead, being alone," and that "by our works we must be judged," forgets the equally important fact that these works must be the result of faith, and only as such can be accepted with God. Now I think that the varied teaching of the apostles is, to say the least, an indication that such would always be the constitution of the Christian Church; and in the same way the uniformity of the apostolic teaching, in that they all combine to teach the pre-eminent excellence of charity, is a most certain proof that the truth of the Christian

religion, and the perfection of the Christian character, consists, not in the unnatural development of any one doctrine at the expense of the others, but in a symmetrical and regular combination of all; and that though one particular aspect of truth be more especially suited to particular minds, yet all must unite in one common grace superior to each individual and favourite doctrine; and though one say, I have faith, and another, I have liberty, and another, I have works, yet all must combine in one common declaration that "the greatest of these is charity."

This, then, being as we believe the apostolic view of charity, it becomes more than ever necessary that we all ask ourselves to what extent we, in our own individual experience, possess this greatest of all Christian graces. Have we even a true conception of what charity is? No single English word has yet been found truly to express the sense of the original; the writer of one of the most remarkable works which this age has produced, has been compelled to paraphrase it by "the enthusiasm of humanity." Philanthropy, and love, and charity, and benevolence have all conventional meanings affixed to them. Indeed, St. Paul himself could not adequately express that which he desired, but by a description of its various manifestations; and as we look through those of which he speaks, we shall find that many of them are attributes which we should naturally assign to other virtues. Thus: "Charity suffereth long:" this is patience. "Charity envieth not:" this is generosity. And so through almost all the list there is scarcely a good quality which is not the characteristic quality of some other grace; and it is obvious that to express charity aright we must find some word which combines them all. If we fail to do this—if human language wants a word to express a combination of all these graces of which the apostle speaks, what do we but thereby confess that human language, like the human nature, is finite and imperfect?—that it is for a man in his present imperfect state of existence to possess one or two of these graces of character, but that to find them all combined, we must wait for the revelation of a future more glorious sphere of existence, or we must turn to Him who brought heaven down here upon earth, even to Him in whom all dwelt. We must acknowledge that in Christ, and by Christ alone, can we at all realise the apostle's ideal of divine love, and then shall we have supplied ourselves with a word which will answer to all our most eager desires; for we shall know and feel that the charity of which the apostle speaks, and the charity which must exist in all our hearts, is nothing more nor less than this—a Christ-like spirit.

Having thus supplied ourselves with some conception of that which the apostle desires to indi-

cate, we are immediately met by a difficulty. The thought at once rises in the mind of the practical Christian, "Yes, it is all very well to read of this charity—this love of which the apostle speaks, but I do not feel it in my heart, and I do not see how I can ever teach myself to feel it; I do not see how I am to control the affections and feelings of my heart." Now it was to just such a state of mind as this that Christ addressed himself when he said, "A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another." And we sometimes wonder as we listen to the words, that he should have called it "a new commandment." Surely, we think, the principle of love, and the commandment to love one another, must have been in existence before the time of Christ. Society itself could not exist on a basis of mutual hatred. But we have only to look to the early history of Christianity to see at once that the love which Christ introduced into the world was, indeed, a new principle altogether. Before that time men had travelled into foreign countries for the purposes of trade, or the accumulation of wealth, or the study of Nature. But when the Apostle Paul crossed continents and seas to impart to his brother-men throughout the world the glad tidings of great joy, then indeed there was afforded to the wondering gaze of mankind such a spectacle of love, or philanthropy, or charity—call it what you will—as no previous age and no previous religion had ever produced. And it was new, too, in extent. Before the time of Christ many a man had nobly yielded up his life, the brave heart within forbidding the escape of a single cry, or the utterance of a single groan; but we shall have to search far and wide ere we find an expiring voice uttering the fervent prayer: "Father, forgive them;" "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Love of family, of friends, of neighbours, was the virtue of heathen morality. Love of enemies was, indeed, a new command on the lips of a Divine Teacher.

Can we, then, teach ourselves this divine, this Christ-like charity? Now, if we hold that the human heart has in it, in its natural state, nothing but what is base and corrupt; if we believe that it has no natural inclination to what is good, and holy, and divine; if human nature in its fallen state has within nothing that is God-like, then we may well inquire, Have Christ and his apostles bidden us perform an impossibility? have they bidden us from an evil tree to pluck good fruit, and from a sour, bitter fountain to produce sweet water? It is a difficulty to which we can give but one solution. It must be possible to cultivate this feeling in the heart, or we should never have received from those divine lips the command to do so. We are, indeed, only commanded to exercise and train feelings which would be natural to us, if our hearts were not so encrusted and hardened by

sin. It is but a natural feeling of even the lower orders of creation, that every creature should love those of its own kind. We have, however, been born and grown up in such an atmosphere of sin, deceit, and craft, that at last they have become, as it were, our very nature. But if we consider what was one of the great objects of Christ's mission upon earth, we shall find that, after all, there is no real difficulty in a practical obedience of the command which he has given us. Christ came to introduce a new life—not merely a new theory of life—not merely a new set of principles to regulate life, and make it somewhat better than it was, but a new life itself; and Christian charity, in its largest, fullest, completest sense, is to be the development of this new life into action.

Has not Christ in giving us the command, then, given us also the means of obeying it? Cultivate, therefore, I beseech you, my friends, the Christ-like spirit, and cultivate it by intimate communion with Christ. We know how the close intercourse of friends ever issues out in likeness of character. We know how the son grows up in the likeness of his father, and the daughter in the likeness of her mother. We know how the husband influences the wife, and the wife the husband: even so it must be with Christ and his Church, and the individual members of that Church. Only by intimate communion and knowledge of Him in whom dwelt all these graces of

charity, can we hope to cultivate them in ourselves.

Learn this new commandment, to love one another, not with the cold, inactive love of a merely human affection, but as He loved us, with an active self-sacrificing love. Learn to forgive as he forgave when he prayed upon the cross for those who knew not what they did. Learn to bear all things as he bore, with an unwavering fortitude and faith. Learn to endure all things as he endured, even unto the end. Learn, in short, of him, that charity which never faileth, outlasting all gifts of tongues, or prophecy, or knowledge. Then, indeed, shall we go forth to our life's work and to our life duties, animated with a spirit and a courage from on high; passing unscathed through all life's troubles and toils; winning victories for God and for good by the conquering power of a Christ-like love. At some future time we shall look back, from a higher sphere of existence, upon those gifts and graces which adorned our path, or helped us on our way in this lower life, and then we shall realise, far more fully than ever we can realise here, that, amidst all the talents with which God has blessed the sons of men, amidst all the gifts of faith, and hope, and zeal, with which the life of man is made like to its divine original, yet greater, far greater, and far more lasting than all, was the gift of Christ-like love.

MID STREAM.



MIDWAY I pause on the stream of
life,
The waters are smooth, the sky is
fair,
My days with many a joy are rife,
Though now and again come throbs
of care.

I bend my sight to the shore behind,
Filled with the sweets of its baby land,
And aye come trooping over my mind
The happy thoughts of that golden strand.

And now youth's fragile craft do I yield
To the pleasant stream, and deftly glide
By verdurous slope, and glowing field,
Yet ever drawing across the tide.

Come shoals and eddies! and I must watch,
For danger threatens by night and day;
The wreckers they hoist false lights to catch
And allure the trusting barque their way.

I clear them all, the amethyst isles
Of love and beauty now greet my gaze;

Bewitching song and enchanting smiles
Arouse my wonder, awake my praise.

I drop my anchor, tarry a day,
And a daintier barque with silken sail,
When that again I pursue my way
Runs with my own to the balmy gale.

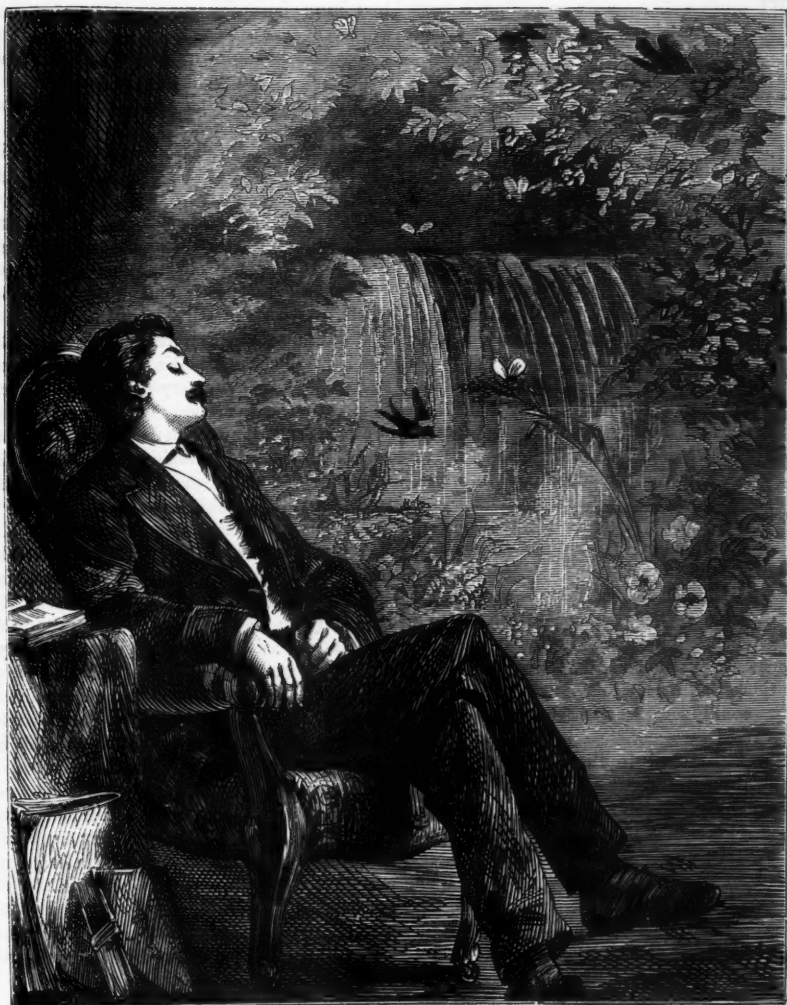
In concert sweet, since that happy hour,
In calm and in storm we've held our course;
And the rudest wind had ne'er the pow'r,
To touch our prow to a day's divorce.

Over the waters I bend my eyes,
The waters our keels have yet to learn,
To th' ghostly shores that in mist arise,
Whence never a barque did yet return.

A yearning stirreth my inmost heart,
And I feel myself grow slowly blind,
As I sigh, "The hour when we must part,
When one shall leave the other behind."

I turn to my consort's love-lit face,
Faith from her eyes beameth calm and grand;
"Fear not," she whispers, "aboundeth grace;
We shall soon rejoice in the better land."

JOHN G. WATTS.



(Drawn by F. A. FRASER.)

"Music sweet of birds and fountains
Trembles faintly far and nigh."—p. 717.

"FROM THE THÜRINGER WALD."

WE three sisters—Polly, Bride, and myself—accompanied by our young brother Gus, were spending a most pleasant six weeks with our German cousins, the Köbels.

Before this long-talked-of visit, we had never seen the Köbels, although we had talked of them all our lives: our respective mothers corresponded, and we children had invariably some messages to exchange. Photographs sometimes came to us from across the sea, bringing queer little representations of our German cousins, with their short-waisted, straight-down little dresses, and hair plaited down their backs, and we romanced and idealised about them, and longed to see the Köbels. Strange, therefore, it was that we should all have arrived at men and women's estates before either saw the other.

"We," the Draytons, had neither of us been abroad before. I was the eldest, Polly and Bride were nineteen and twenty, and Gus seventeen. On the whole, we managed our journey better than might have been expected; but, then, we all knew a little German, and the mustered efforts of the four of us, got us along in a way we were proud of, as we afterwards related our adventures when safely at home again.

The Köbels, father and mother, two sons and two daughters, were very pleased to see us, and very kind to us. They lived in the upper part of a large house just out of the town. From the windows there was a very fine view; from two of them, one could see, in the far distance, the Thüringer Wald.

We were introduced to the whole town, and many pleasant parties were got up on our account; not the English sort of evening parties, but all meeting together at a certain coffee-house, where we all drank coffee and ate *zwiebäcke* under great sheltering trees, or in vine-covered summer-houses, with bunches of sweet green little grapes hanging over our heads; afterwards we had all kinds of games in wood and field, as if we were all so many children. In the evenings we either walked, or rode home in open long wagons, singing all the way.

The life was so different to our English life, and the ways, customs, and manners so different to what we were accustomed to, that the novelty gave it a great charm, and we wrote home glowing descriptions of our stay with the Köbels.

Many of the coffee-houses we visited were within an easy distance of the great Thüringer Wald, whose dark massive lines would spread between us and the evening sky, and the intense heat of the weather (for it was about Midsummer)

would make us long to shelter ourselves beneath its shades. We were to spend one day there, that had been faithfully promised us, but we were impatient for that day's arrival.

We had not known much about this brave old Thüringer Wald before we came to stay in its vicinity; in fact, I may, I think, safely say that we knew there was a German song which Bride, like most young ladies, sang, called "*Volkslied aus Thüringen*," but this was about the Alpha and Omega of our knowledge respecting it. Now, however, we had endless tales poured into our ears of old German knights, noble men, and beautiful women; of wars and disasters; of marvellous escapes; and brave and daring deeds.

Our cousins' names were Mariechen and Katinka, Adolf and Paul. And Katinka was kind enough to have a birthday (a very grand day in Germany) in prospect. Everybody was privately preparing presents; Aunt, or Tante Köbel, as we had learned to call her, was busy making cakes, and all sorts of goodies; and, above all, the auspicious day was to be spent in the Thüringer Wald.

All this was very nice and enjoyable. Katinka was the favourite with all of us—such a bright, merry, good-natured girl was she. As for poor Gus, to my certain knowledge he invested his last halfpenny in buying her such a grand brooch, that he was reduced to a beggarly state of penury during the rest of his visit.

The day before the birthday everybody was as busy as possible, Katinka, of course, intensely ignorant of all proceedings, above and beyond the fact that we were all, for some reason or other, going to the Thüringer Wald to-morrow. Mariechen and Bride were making pretty wreaths. Polly was finishing off her present for Katinka, I was helping Tante Köbel in her cooking business, and Gus was made to run everybody's errands and take all the trouble; but he was such a good-natured fellow that he always did get taken advantage of. And then he had such unfortunately long legs, that people were apt to think he could go through any amount of fatigue. He was so thin, and possessed too such a marvellous length of throat with a great knob in it, that he almost looked as if he had been passed through a tube, and somehow or other had had his neck pulled out ever so much too long.

On the morning of the twenty-fourth of June we were all up with the lark—or earlier, if possible—arranging the wreaths about the room and Katinka's chair, and flowers and presents around her plate. German ways and customs in these things are so pretty. In England who would

take this trouble? A birthday with us is sometimes scarcely noticed.

When all was arranged and breakfast ready, we girls all went with Mariechen, carrying a lovely wreath of deep crimson rosebuds and white jessamine, and fetched Katinka, and having congratulated and wished her many happy returns of the day, we put the wreath on her head and brought her into the dining-room.

She looked very pretty as we brought her in, all dressed in white, and with the flowers in her dark hair. Gus stammered, and got crimson, and made a regular mess of his congratulations.

We watched her fly at her plate and receive her presents; not in the placid way an English girl would have done, but with childish delight and complete German enthusiasm—little ecstatic shrieks and kissings.

It was a mad sort of meal, that breakfast; nobody seemed to settle down properly to eat anything; and in the middle of it all Katinka's friends came in to congratulate her, and to bring pretty bouquets and gifts. It was a most bewildering scene; the room seemed to be full of people, all talking loudly at once—for German girls do talk very much louder than English girls—and all kissing Katinka in a very audible way.

They had scarcely gone, and the cousins who were to join our party for the day, Baron von Perleberg and his sister, arrived, when it was announced that our conveyance was ready.

There was a great rush of dressing and seeing the hampers carried down, in the midst of which Gus came and whispered in a foreboding tone to me, "I say, Fanny, such a wretched old omnibus has come for us!"

My usual remark, "I dare say it is the custom here," did not now fail me; and down-stairs we all went, laughing and chattering, and got up, one and all, within an inch of our lives. As for Gus, I cannot say what the effect must have been on his German cousins, whose equipment he hopelessly eclipsed; but I know that Gus's own sisters were quite staggered.

The dreadful ramshackle old omnibus undertook to carry ten inside and one out, beside the driver. Adolf said he would ride outside; and Gus, everybody thought, would tuck in as well—better than anybody else; for we were one too many, and better, we thought, be crowded outside, even in the sun, than inside, in such frightful heat; and Gus, of course, was quite pleased at any arrangement.

The horses, anticipating the heat, looked already jaded and fatigued, with heads and ears down; the driver, who hadn't got too much clothing on, was sitting lazily contemplating us as we came out, with his arms crossed on his knees, and leisurely smoking a great pipe.

By some strange contrivance the old omnibus was high up in air, and the first step up to it so far from the ground, that we came to a standstill and contemplated it.

At length Adolf, who had always gone through his gymnastic exercises in a way his fellow-townsmen were proud of, sprang up, and offered to assist any one up the ascent; hereupon, Tante Köbel desired one of the servants to bring out two very high footstools; these being placed one on the other made entrance into the omnibus practicable.

Katinka was ably assisted up by the baron. Afterwards Gus intimated to me that he wished he had not settled to go outside with Adolf, because he expected it would be dreadfully hot. However, we all got packed away, and the whole affair began to move. With much rattling, jogging, and scraping we passed through the town, Polly and Bride feeling, as they afterwards told me, intensely ashamed of the whole turn out.

There was a glass window up at the end of the omnibus, opening upon the driver's seat; we got, however, little or no benefit from this window, it being tightly filled up with backs. By-and-by, when we had passed through the gates and were going along one of those wonderfully straight German roads which go on for so many miles without ever a turn, Gus turned round and peeped down. Poor Gus!

Did you ever notice how warm a very fair person looks when he feels warm? Gus did so, and his light eyelashes drooping weakly over his scarlet cheek, he inquired, "Has any one got a parasol to lend a fellow?"

This had to be translated for the baron's edification, and he instantly remarked that the Engländer was afraid of his complexion; and somebody else observed that Gus was the fairest flower amongst the party.

Several parasols were proffered, but Gus chose Katinka's, which, he said, was the most serviceable. Adolf preferred to bask without a parasol.

It was a good two hours' drive, when at length we drew up before a picturesque little farmhouse, and delightedly we were, one by one, landed on the ground. The farmhouse stood at the very edge of the forest, and we were impatient to be off and search it cool shades, but Uncle Köbel called us back to settle at what hour we should meet for dinner.

Tante Köbel was consulting with the haus-frau,* and presently she came back talking eagerly about something, which was caught up instantly by the rest, who all took the opportunity to talk German faster than we could follow it, until Tante Köbel, who, of course, spoke English better than either of her children, told us that we were most lucky,

* Housewife.

for we should just come in for the interesting sight of seeing how ants' eggs were collected for birds' food. Eager for anything, we were at once ready to set off.

It was about twelve o'clock, and almost the hottest part of the Midsummer day; but, sheltered under umbrellas, we made our way, as we had been directed, to an open field, where we could see a great many men at work. We did not envy them their labour; for, with the sun baking down upon them, they had dug great trenches in the earth.

We were anxious to see how this business was accomplished, for, having several birds in cages at home, we generally had a stock of ants' eggs by us for their consumption. It had never occurred to us to wonder how they were collected, any more than we imagined that the greater part of the ants' eggs which are sold in England come from the neighbourhood of the Thüringer Wald.

These men, in their long blue blouses and huge wooden shoes, were working away with a stolid indifference to heat and fatigue—perhaps consoled for both by the everlasting pipes they were smoking. I cannot imagine a German when he has not a pipe in his mouth.

We stood over the trenches watching. Wheelbarrows, full of loose earth as it seemed to me, were being thrown into them. What was that loose earth for? we wanted to know.

That loose earth was ants' nests which they had collected. Amongst the heaps which were spread out in the sun we could distinguish eggs and ants and earth mixed up. We now became interested, and wondered how the eggs were to be selected, and further, why the men should choose the hottest part of a Midsummer day for their work.

All this was gradually explained to us as we watched on, almost forgetful of the intensity of the heat, in our interest in the proceedings.

Whilst some of the men continued bringing more and more heaps of ants' nests, and filling other trenches, other men were observed coming out of the forest hard by, bearing huge branches of trees.

"What is going to happen now?" said Polly.

"Oh, you will see," returned Paul: "they will make the ants save them the trouble of collecting the eggs by doing it themselves."

"Make the ants collect their own eggs for them!" was our general exclamation.

"Wait a bit, you will see."

We eagerly watched the men coming towards us, bearing waving bits of green trees.

Over parts of the trenches the branches were closely and thickly laid, casting thereby a deep shadow below them. Then the ants were left in peace, and no more were added to that heap of nests.

The little busy disturbed things were running here and there and everywhere at once, turning themselves round every second and running in an opposite direction. By-and-by, one or two came running farther away, and got under the shadow; here they paused, ran about, paused again, and after a little more running backwards and forwards, they went rushing back to where lay their ruined nests.

In a little while the poor little ants began dragging along the great eggs, which were bigger than themselves, and gradually carrying them under the shade of the branches. One after the other, hundreds and hundreds of ants began this same weary work. And we, who had got so immensely interested in it all that we could have stood all day watching them, had we not seen and heard Tante Köbel in the distance, waving her handkerchief and calling us to come to dinner—we reluctantly left the trenches, making up our minds to return, so soon as dinner should be over, to see how our poor little friends got on with their work.

Dinner was laid in the green, shady Thüringer Wald itself. On the table, pretty fruit on great cool leaves; queer-shaped jugs of water or home-brewed wine; home-made brown bread—rather gritty—and homely, substantial fare. There was a girl waiting upon us, her massive hair coiled all over her head, a broad, intensely good-humoured face, and a simple short dress.

When the prolonged repast was finally over, a game of hide-and-seek was proposed. Two were to go and hide and the rest to seek, Katinka of course to be one of the hidiers. Gus with a boyish movement sprang forward, and with a look entreated of her to let him be the other: but the baron quietly said, "I beg your pardon, but Fräulein Katinka has already promised me."

Katinka looked up at him with a quick look, and then half pityingly at the evident disappointment on Gus's honest face. But the others were impatient to begin, so off these two started.

That afternoon in the Thüringer Wald will never be forgotten by any of us, for we were, with perhaps the exception of poor Gus, all perfectly happy. If anything did interfere with his pleasure, it was, what he called, the absurd and ridiculous behaviour of the baron, and Katinka's contentment in the same.

Not until after coffee did we bethink ourselves of our small friends the ants, and we hastened back to the open field where were the trenches. The men who had been at work in them were all having their suppers; but the ants were still at work for them. Under the branches of the trees lay the white eggs in hundreds and hundreds, all carefully cleared from the nests, and piled in great clean heaps.

Poor little busy ants! what a labour in vain

to save their eggs. The men came and carefully collected all the eggs from every trench; and after baking, these are sold to the English market for good prices, and household pets enjoy them as dainties.

As we once more, but in the cool shades of the evening, clambered to our places in the old omnibus to drive home, I sat opposite to Katinka and the baron, and in both their faces saw the gathering promise of many happy returns of the day for both of them.

We were immensely merry during our return,

and Polly and Bride forgot all about being ashamed of our conveyance by the time we once more reached the town. It was a lovely evening, and when we got home the moon was shining with a silvery witchery around us. We thought it a perfect ending to a perfect day; but Gus with a spirit of contradiction remarked that it was not to be compared to what he and Adolf, from their position on the box, had been enabled to see to perfection—namely, the afterglow of a red sunset behind the dense, dark wall of the grand old Thüringer Wald.

J. H.

AFTER-THOUGHTS.

I.

LOSE the book, O weary student,
Leave the legends and the lore:
Can the head be wise and prudent
When the heart is sad and sore?

Turn aside from subtle fable;
Probe no more for hidden truth;
It is more than thou art able
In thy fierce, unrestful youth.

Whence this sudden hot aspiring
After laurel-wreaths of fame?
Whence this strain and toil untiring
For far echoes of a name?

Ah! it is that frequent story,
Love has failed in faith and fled,
And thou speedest after glory,
Saying, "It shall serve instead."

Close thine eyes on this dark present;
Open them upon the light
Of the times when life was pleasant
And its hopes were large and bright:

Music sweet of birds and fountains
Trembles faintly far and nigh;
And yon solemn chain of mountains
Bears earth's throbbings to the sky

Youth and maid in tender fashion
Saunter round and down the path;
Ere the paling of her passion
And the rising of his wrath:

Ere their hearts were coldly sundered
By a shear too small for name,
Even while he grieved and wondered
How and why the weapon came.

II.

Rouse thee, rouse thee, drowsy sleeper,
Dreams are maudlin moods at best;
Joys await thee, sweeter, deeper
Than have ever moved thy breast

Trumpet-tongues peal forth to waken
Thee to march to sterner fields,
Where Truth's outposts are sore shaken
By the force that Error wields—

Lo! the large-limbed, gaunt Goliath
Trampling leagues of blood-red sod
Hear how loudly he defies
All the armaments of God!

See his monster-fingers crippling,
With a wrench, some flying foe:
Forth against the giant,—stripling
Thine it is to deal the blow;

It is thine, O ruddy David,
God shall conquer by thy youth,
That his sons be not self-saved,
But prevail by right of Truth.

Is not this far grander vision,
Sweeter, too, than all the past,
Though thou meet with men's derision
For that thou art least and last?

Ah! the faithless crowd shall jostle,
Fickle friends forsake thee then,
Seeing not the Great Apostle
In a man like common men.

So be it—they fail and falter
Like all smiling things of earth;
So that God, who cannot alter,
May reward thee with His worth.

B.

NELLIE MARSHALL.

PART I.

DERE, you lazy nigger, take dat! Ef you're ill, I guess a dose of dis'll do you more good dan anyting else;" and the speaker gave poor Pompey two or three blows with a large, heavy whip.

Giving the overseer a glance of bitter hatred, the negro sullenly resumed his work.

It was one of the hottest of hot days, and a white haze seemed to dance in the air. Not a white person was to be seen, nevertheless the poor negroes were obliged to toil on their hardest, exposed to the burning rays of a Jamaica sun. They were gathering the tobacco-plant; a slave-driver was walking about the field, and woe to the negro who was detected resting even for a moment from his labour.

"What, Pompey, you restin' agin!" exclaimed the slave-driver, coming up with a crack of his whip.

"Can't work, massa; I'se ill," replied Pompey, sullenly.

"Wait till de evenin', and I'll soon cure yer!" exclaimed the driver, menacingly.

That evening Pompey was bound to a tree, and two negroes were made to whip him. They were in the midst of their unpleasant occupation, when a little white girl came running up.

"Leave off directly, you cruel, cruel men! How can you be so wicked?" cried the child, with her blue eyes full of tears.

"Massa told Sambo to flog dis nigger," answered one of the men, raising his lash to strike Pompey again.

"Leave off this moment. How dare you?" said the child, with flashing eyes and clenched hands. "Oh, look at his poor back!" continued the child, pleadingly, sobbing between each word as if her little heart would break.

The poor slave had scarcely uttered a groan at first, but when he heard the child's pitying tone, heavy, tearless sobs shook his frame convulsively. The child renewed her pleading, crying bitterly the while.

"Can't help it, missey," said the man who had before spoken, doggedly; "nigger won't work;" and a third time he raised his lash.

Nellie's tears were gone now, and with white lips, and two burning spots of red upon her cheeks, in a moment she had stepped between Pompey and the man who was flogging him. The lash descended heavily on her shoulder and arm, leaving a dreadful wale there.

"Go 'way, missey," said Pompey, feebly.

The actors in this scene were so excited by it,

that they did not hear the approaching footsteps of Nellie's nurse and her brother and sisters.

"Oh, missey! what will yer mammy say," exclaimed the girl, "to see yer hurt like dat?"

Nellie immediately began to pour out an incoherent account of the poor slave's sufferings. As soon as the nurse understood Nellie's story, she turned to Sambo, and with flashing eyes exclaimed, "I'se shamed at yer, yer great big bully, to whip anoder nigger like dat. Yer can't hurt him no more jes now," she continued; for Pompey had fainted.

Sambo now cut the thongs that bound the poor slave to the tree, and laying him down on the ground, left him to recover as best he might.

"Ah, de day'll come when ye'll rue dis bit o' work," muttered Fanny, with a malicious gleam in her black eyes.

Poor girl! she did not know any better, for she had not been taught when she was young how wrong it is to nourish thoughts of revenge; and although her kind mistress taught her now, she often forgot her teaching; for it is very much harder to learn when we are grown up, than when we are children.

Seeing that Nellie would not leave the poor negro in his present condition, and not feeling inclined to do so herself, Fanny went to the edge of the plantation, and dipping her handkerchief into one of the water-troughs which stood there, laid it on Pompey's forehead. After two or three applications he revived. "Can yer stand up, Pompey?" asked Fanny, after a few minutes had elapsed; "cos I could help yer to dat 'ar trash-house. Dere's some cotton for yer to lie on dere."

"Tank 'ee kindly, missis," answered Pompey, making a feeble effort to rise.

After one or two attempts he succeeded, and leaning heavily on the mulatto girl, reached the trash-house, where, having supplied him with water, they left him. Nellie's little brother and sisters were soon merrily talking and laughing, but Nellie, who was older, could not so easily forget a scene in which she had borne so prominent a part.

She walked soberly all the way home, without speaking; and as soon as they entered the house went straight to her mamma's room.

"Do ask papa to do something for him," she exclaimed, eagerly, when she had finished her story.

"My dear Nellie," said Mrs. Marshall, sadly, "I am quite as sorry for the poor man as you are, but I am afraid papa can do nothing in the matter, as Pompey is not his property."

When Mr. and Mrs. Marshall were talking about Pompey, Nellie could not help wondering why her papa lived in Jamaica, and had slaves, as she knew he disliked the system so much.

When she was in bed, and her mamma came to give her little girl the usual good-night kiss, Nellie expressed these thoughts to her.

"My dear Nellie," answered Mrs. Marshall, "before your papa and I were married we both lived in England, and he was not so rich as he is now. Your papa had an uncle, who lived on this estate, and when he died he made a will, leaving all his slaves and the estate to him. Affairs had got into great disorder at the time papa came here, as Mr. Symondson, having very poor health, had left everything in the hands of an overseer. I think my little girl is old enough to understand what I am about to tell her. These poor Africans have been slaves for more than two hundred years. As a rule, their masters have prevented them from learning anything which would make them grow wiser and better; and have even in some cases been wicked enough to foster their evil passions, in order to attain a greater command over them; for you know that while they have dissensions among themselves they will never have sufficient strength to harm the white people. Of course, as the parents were ignorant and wicked, each succeeding generation became less clever and good. This being the case, if the negroes were set free at once, they would be unable to govern themselves, and would be a great trouble to the Europeans. This is the reason papa has established a school for his negroes, and has taken so much trouble with their moral and religious education. He has, for all the slaves on his estate, a paper, which makes them legally free, and is only awaiting a fitting time to make it known to them."

"Oh, mamma, how glad I am!" exclaimed Nellie; "and what a good dear papa mine is! I suppose he will have to pay them when they are free."

"Papa means to pay them at first by giving each negro a piece of land to cultivate for his own and his family's benefit," answered Mrs. Marshall.

"How kind!" answered Nellie. "Thank you very much, mamma, for telling me all this."

"I think you have been awake long enough to-night, dear, so go to sleep, and to-morrow I will show you one of the papers which makes a slave free; and now good night, my darling."

"Good night, dear mamma," answered Nellie; and she was soon fast asleep.

The next morning Mrs. Marshall sent Nellie to her dressing-room, and placing the paper in her hand, left her to read it.

Nellie had scarcely finished her perusal of the document, when she felt a light touch on her shoulder, and on turning round was confronted by Zillie, an

African girl, in whom she took especial interest, as she was exactly her own age.

Zillie's face looked strangely earnest, as she asked, abruptly, "What's dat, Missey Nellie?"

"Mamma told me not to tell any one," replied Nellie.

"Nebber mind, den," answered Zillie, quietly.

But Nellie did not feel quite easy, for Zillie could read, and she might have seen enough to awaken her suspicions as to the character of the document. She was just going to question Zillie about it, when the words were arrested on her lips by a loud scream.

"Whatebber's dat?" said Zillie.

Before Nellie could speak, the cry was repeated.

"It's de tank, missey!" cried Zillie, rushing out on the balcony, followed by Nellie.

"Make haste—make haste! I've drowned!" cried a voice, and, rushing down the balcony-steps, Nellie saw a little black girl clinging, with a look of desperate fright, to the edge of the tank, just over the water.

In order to understand this scene, I must explain that in Jamaica every house has belonging to it a large tank, sunk in the ground, for bathing. The balcony, which was all round the house, terminated in a number of iron steps, at the bottom of which was the bathing-place, under the cover of a barn-like building. When any one wishes to bathe, portable steps are brought and fixed on to the side of the tank.

Cassy was really in a position of no little danger, for there was quite four feet of water in the tank, and, as the zinc rose about the same distance above the surface of the ground, she could not easily free herself from her perilous position.

"Hold still," cried Nellie, "and I will fetch the steps."

In another moment Nellie had fixed the steps, and Cassy was safely landed on the ground.

"However did you get there, Cassy?" asked Nellie, as the child gave herself a vigorous shake.

"Dunno 'zactly, missey. I was tryin' to walk on the edge, and I heard a skreek. I guess it's kind o' skeered me like," continued Cassy, sagely.

"I was so frightened when I saw you hanging there. You might have been drowned," said Nellie, gravely.

"Oh, I aint skeered o' dat, missey! Massa says when I die I've gwine to be shot; but I'm not a gwine to die at all jes yet, I don't see no kinder call to't. I'd ha' been killed heaps o' times ef I'd been like oder folks," said Cassy, demurely. "You was reilly skeered! Ha! ha!" laughed Cassy, till the tears rolled down her black cheeks. "Don't you know I've on'y a nigger gal?" and with an almost impossible somersault she was outside the building.

Nellie followed her, and said, gently, "That makes no difference, Cassy. I should be just as sorry to see you hurt or in danger, as I should to see any white person so."

"It was you dat wouldn't let Sambo flog daddy, wasn't it?" returned Cassy.

"I would stop him always if I could," replied Nellie, earnestly.

"I'm a gwine," said Cassy, "else I shall catch it;" and with two or three bounds she was at the top of the steps, and had disappeared into the house.

"I wonder where Zillie is," thought Nellie. "I will go and look for her." But both Zillie and Cassy had disappeared, and were nowhere to be found.

"Nellie, my dear," said Mrs. Marshall, coming into the drawing-room, "if you have done with that paper, give it to me."

"Very well, mamma, I will run and fetch it," answered Nellie; but when she had looked all over the dressing-room, she could not see it anywhere.

"Oh, dear! mamma, what shall I do? I can't find it anywhere," said Nellie.

"Go and look again, dear; it must not be lost," answered Mrs. Marshall; but although she herself assisted in the search (which was extended to the rest of the house), and questioned the servants, nobody had seen it.

Nellie's mamma was at first inclined to be displeased with her; but when she heard what had made her so forgetful, she regarded it only as an unfortunate accident.

In the evening, when Nellie was in the garden, she heard somebody whispering her name, and, looking round, saw Cassy crouching down behind the bamboo paling.

"What do you want, Cassy?" she asked.

"Come here, missey."

Nelly went out into the road.

"Did you lose anything dis mornin'?" asked Cassy, walking slowly from the house.

"Yes," answered Nellie, eagerly.

"What was it like?" asked Cassy, walking a little faster.

"A large piece of parchment, with writing on it," replied Nellie.

"Oh, I found someting o' dat kind dis mornin'," said Cassy, carelessly.

"Did you? Oh, where is it?" asked Nellie, impatiently.

"Dunno," replied Cassy. "I dropped it somewhere 'bout."

"Oh, do try and think where you left it," exclaimed Nellie, eagerly; "it is very valuable."

"I dropped it near some bushes, a little farder 'way," answered Cassy. "Fanny told me what a fuss dere was 'bout a paper jes afore I went, so I tinks mebbe 'twas dat one."

"Oh! I hope it is," said Nellie. "Are these the bushes?"

Cassy nodded, and Nellie busied herself in searching for the important paper, while her companion stood idly humming one of the negro melodies.

"I must make haste and get home," said Nellie, anxiously; "it is getting near bedtime."

Scarcely had these words passed her lips, when she felt herself seized from behind. Very much alarmed, Nellie tried to cry out, but the moment she opened her mouth, a huge piece of wet cotton was thrust into it, and some one proceeded to tie a bandage over her mouth, and one over her eyes. Her hands were then bound together, and she felt herself lifted up and carried along at a great pace.

(To be concluded in our next.)

SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC.

A WICKED queen command had given
God's prophets should be slain;
Nor help nor hope seemed there at hand,
The cry for succour vain.

Not so. This queen a steward had,
Who "greatly feared the Lord,"
And many of that sentenced band
He rescued from the sword.

1. He to his son-in-law gave counsel sage;
Hence let us learn respect is due to age.
2. A noble youth! this surely must be he;
No; God alone the inmost heart can see.
3. An artful servant who false witness bare,
And of his master's goods thus gained a share.
4. With his left hand he dealt the mortal blow,
And freed God's people from their cruel foe.
5. One of the princes who, at God's command,
Apportioned out by lot the promised land.
6. A mighty seer in Israel's ancient days,
Whose very bones had power the dead to raise.
7. This patriarch, with work and toil oppress,
Hoped in his son to find relief and rest.